

waive any rights under statutory or court – made law respecting application of doctrine(s) of equivalents.

Claims 6 and 21 and 22 have been amended to be independent claims that include all the features of their parent claims. Claim 4 is amended to be an independent claim. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim applicants' invention including the feature that the anodic bonding between the front mask and bonding element is to the rear surface of the front mask.

REJECTION BASED ON INDEFINITENESS

Claims 1, 4, 6, 16, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sect. 112, second, as being indefinite for the use of the term “first like-plurality of holes”. Clearly, “like-plurality of holes” when read in light of the specification means the same number of holes as the “first plurality” of holes in the front mask. Note “corresponding holes” appearing, EG, at bottom of page 7 and top of page 8 and related figures of the present specification. Accordingly, Applicant requests withdrawal of the subject rejection in view of these clarifying remarks.

Nevertheless, if the Examiner prefers, Applicant would be willing to amend the claims changing “like-plurality” to “corresponding plurality” since the latter term appears in the specification.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS

In view of the Office Action , paragraph No. 8, claims 6 – 13, 21 , and 22 stand allowable since the ultimate parent claims are now drawn as independent claims.

REJECTIONS BASED ON PRIOR ART:

Claim 1 – 5, 14 – 19, and 23 stand under 35U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Jian ('482) in view of Sherman et al ('650). Applicant respectfully traverses such rejection. Jian purports to disclose a mask 130 anodic bonded to a boron glass wafer 140. A VScel wafer 603 is bonded to this wafer by optical epoxy 650. The front surface of mask 130 is surface 141, i.e., where the fiber 100 terminates to optically cooperate with the lens system. Accordingly, Jian teaches anodic bonding only the front surface to a lens wafer and teaches no anodic bonding element that can function as the one claimed herein.

Sherman, on the other hand, shows no anodic bonding at all and simply uses standard epoxies and bonding materials, that have different thermal characteristics from the masks and spacer, to bond the spacer plate to the first and second masks.

Clearly, from the present specification and the amended independent claims 1 and 16, the present invention is the first to anodic bond the rear surface of the front mask to the bonding element. This feature is important so that the back surface of the bonding element is available for further anodic bonding to a second mask

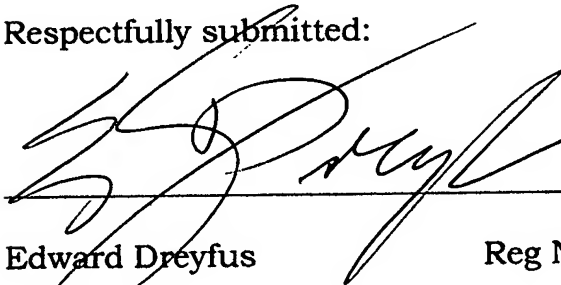
without reducing the work residual heat and then reheating to undertake the second bonding operation for the second mask. See first bullet point at the top of present specification, page 11 where the three plates 12, 14, 16 are stacked and the bonding bullets on page 11 where the front and second masks are bonded during the same heating of the work, by simply reversing the polarity of the voltage, etc. Neither Jian nor Sherman et al even hints at these benefits nor the benefit of having the entire stack with the same thermal characteristic. Also, there is no evidence in either reference of applying the front face anodic bonding of Jian to the rear surface of Sherman et al or how one would apply anodic bonding to more than one surface of the spacer, particularly since the spacer material of Sherman does not lend itself to anodic bonding and Jian shows no spacer at all.

Applicant, therefore, submits that Claims 1, 4, and 16 are allowable because neither Jian nor Sherman et al, alone or in combination, teach an array with anodic bonding a bonding element to the rear surface of a front mask as claimed.

Since all other claims ultimately depend from allowed claims 6 and 21 or independent Claims 1 or 16, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and request a notice of Allowability to issue. Reconsideration in view of the above remarks is respectfully requested.

In the event the prosecution hereof can be efficiently advanced by a telephone conference, it is requested that the undersigned attorney be called at 908-233-4666.

Respectfully submitted:

 Date: Oct 25, 2004

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Claim listing attached